

Fairfield Police Department Holding Facility

2006-2007 Solano County Grand Jury

Reason for Investigation

California Penal Code §919 subsection (b) provides: "The grand jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county." Pursuant to the statute, the 2006-2007 Grand Jury inspected the Fairfield Police Department and holding facility.

Grand Jury Actions

- Toured the Department and holding facility with duty officer
- Discussed the Department holding process
- Inspected the holding cells

Background / Summary

The Fairfield Police Department has four holding cells. At the time of our visit, some cells were in the process of being repaired. This area is constantly monitored by camera. Juveniles are controlled by an officer when the cells are full. On the day of our inspection, the holding cells were vacant. The Department does not house individuals overnight. Ten to twenty arrests are made each week. Emergency evacuation procedures were not posted in the holding cell area, but are visible near each entrance. A defibrillator is on the premises and in all vehicles.

The Department has 130 sworn officers of which eight are female. At the time of our visit, the department had 15 sworn officer vacancies. There are 100 to 150 non-sworn personnel, and approximately 30 volunteers from the community. An officer is posted at each high school and there is a roving officer for the middle schools. An officer is available upon request to visit schools to point out the dangers of gang and drug involvement. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (D.A.R.E.) was discontinued due to budget constraints, personnel shortages and growth in the population.

The Special Operations Division is responsible for different units. The Crime Prevention Unit has specialists who provide valuable information and empowers the community to combat crime. The Crime Free Multi-housing Unit keeps illegal activity out of apartment communities. The Kids' Safety House is a portable house equipped with appliances, phone, etc., to teach basic fire and home safety. Another unit is the Police Student Internship Program, which is a formal arrangement between the Department and Solano Community College. This program provides vocational opportunities for students who are working toward a Criminal Justice Degree.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1 - The holding cells appear to meet the needs of the Fairfield Police Department

Recommendation 1 - None

Finding 2 - There is a vacancy of 15 sworn officers.

Recommendation 2 - The Department should actively continue recruiting efforts to eliminate the shortage.

Finding 3 - The D.A.R.E. program has been suspended.

Recommendation 3 - The Department should research successful programs comparable to D.A.R.E and consider adopting for use in Fairfield schools.

Comments

We commend the Fairfield Police Department in its efforts to curtail crime by use of community involvement programs, such as the Citizen Observe and Report Patrol program and the Quality Neighborhood Teams program. The Department is also working with the local newspaper to report on crime prevention through “Tip of the Week” and “Ask a Fairfield Police Officer.”

Other community programs include Neighborhood Watch, Operation 10 Fingerprinting, and a Citizens Academy held twice yearly for nine weeks to educate the public on the functions of the Fairfield Police Department.

Emergency 911 calls from all cell phones go directly to the California Highway Patrol. Fairfield Police Department recently established an emergency telephone number, (707) 428-7373, for cell phone users in Fairfield that go directly to the Department Dispatch Center for faster response.

Affected Agencies

- Fairfield Police Department
- Fairfield City Manager
- Fairfield City Council

Courtesy Copy

Solano County Supervisor Jim Spering